

## Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 988

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0202

RABAT FOR REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BPRO EAGR

SUBJECT: LARG SEEKS AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIERS FOR  
MAJOR PROJECTS

1. SUMMARY: LIBYAN MINISTER OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
ASKED EMBASSY TO PUT HIM IN TOUCH WITH AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL  
COMPANIES WITH VIEW TOWARD CONTRACTING FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES  
AND EQUIPMENT FOR MAJOR PROJECTS. HE NEEDS LARGE QUANTITIES  
OF PASTURAGE SEED AS WELL. TO HELP REALIZE THESE OBJECTIVES,  
MINISTER WOULD LIKE TO VISIT U.S. TOWARD END OF MARCH AND  
ASKED IF PROGRAM COULD BE ARRANGED FOR HIM. THIS APPEARS  
TO BE SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, AND BELIEVE POSSIBLE  
VISIT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS PURELY FOR BUSINESS PURPOSE.  
END SUMMARY.

2. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVEL-  
OPMENT, ABDUL MAJID AL-QAAUD (OR GA'UD), ASKED CHARGE AND ECONOFF  
TO MEET WITH HIM FEB. 16. HE TOLD US IN URGENT TERMS OF HIS AND  
HIS GOVT'S KEEN INTEREST IN HAVING AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL COMPANIES  
SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO LIBYA, HOPEFULLY WITHIN MONTH, TO  
EXAMINE POSSIBILITIES OF SELLING LARG:

A) CONSULTANT SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT FOR LARGE SCALE AGRICULTURAL  
PROJECTS (ONE ONGOING AND ONE PROPOSED) IN SOUTHEAST LIBYA; AND  
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B) LARGE QUANTITIES OF SEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PASTURAGE LAND.

3. THIRD SUBJECT ON MINISTER'S MIND WAS DESIRE TO MAKE HIS FIRST VISIT TO U.S. AT END OF MARCH TO INSPECT RECLAIMED PASTURAGE AREAS AND MEET AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIERS AND EXPERTS IN CONNECTION WITH ABOVE PROJECTS. HE ASKED WHAT SORT OF PROGRAM COULD BE ARRANGED FOR HIM ALONG THESE LINES. HE HOPED COMPANY REPS COULD VISIT LIBYA AND HAVE DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM HERE BEFORE HE WENT TO U.S.

4. MINISTER TOLD US MULTI-HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR KUFRA AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, STARTED SEVERAL YEARS AGO BY OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM CO. AND NOW NATIONALIZED, WAS HAVING INCREASINGLY SERIOUS PROBLEMS. HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE AMERICAN FIRM OR FIRMS TO STUDY THESE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND PROPOSE REMEDIES. QAAUD EXPLAINED DIFFICULTIES ARE RESULT OF ORIGINAL FAULTY DESIGN BY AMERICAN PLANNERS. HE MENTIONED WHAT HE CONSIDERED INADEQUATE PERFORMANCE PREVIOUSLY BY DENVER ENGINEERING COMPANY OF TIPTON AND KALMBACH. AMONG REMEDIES WOULD BE REPLACEMENT OF 120 LARGE PUMPS TO IRRIGATE 10,000 HECTARES BECAUSE ORIGINAL PUMPS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT HAVE DETERIORATED AND ARE INADEQUATE. UNDERGROUND WATER LEVEL HAS DROPPED CONSIDERABLY AND PRESENT PUMPS NO LONGER BRING WATER TO SURFACE SATISFACTORILY. WATER IS SPRAYED AT HIGH ANGLE AND SIXTY PERCENT EVAPORATES BEFORE TOUCHING CROPS.

5. NORTHWEST OF KUFRA AT TAZERBO LARG WISHES FEASIBILITY STUDIES BY AMERICAN FIRM TO DETERMINE WHETHER TO DEVELOP A SIMILAR PROJECT FOR WHEAT PRODUCTION.

6. QAAUD SAID TEAM FROM UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA RECENTLY SURVEYED AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS ON KUFRA PROJECT. MINISTER HAS ALSO BEEN IN TOUCH WITH MUHIEDDIN AHMAD, PAKISTANI IN U.S. (OHIO UNIVERSITY, ATHENS, OHIO) WHO IS EMINENT AGRICULTURALIST.  
(END UNCLASSIFIED)

7. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) COMMENT: THIS APPEARS TO BE A SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY. DESPITE STRAINS IN MANY OTHER ASPECTS OF U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS, WE PERCEIVE NO STRONG REASONS NOT TO ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE AMERICAN COMPANIES TO MAKE CONTACT WITH MINISTER FOR MORE DETAILED INFO. HE IS TRAINED  
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ENGINEER AND HAS REPUTATION AS YOUNG, HARD DRIVING ADMINISTRATOR. PERHAPS FURTHER INDICATION OF LARG'S INTENTION TO IMPROVE AND REORGANIZE KUFRA PROJECT IS APPOINTMENT FEB 17 BY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF NEW PROJECT DIRECTOR, UMRAN AL-MASHAMAKH.

8. BELIEVE ALSO QAAUD'S PROPOSED VISIT TO U.S. SHOULD BE VIEWED AS NON-POLITICAL AND PURELY FOR BUSINESS PURPOSE. WOULD HOPE DEPTS OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE COULD ARRANGE GOOD PROGRAM FOR

MINISTER AND WE COULD GO BACK TO HIM WITH POSITIVE ANSWERS  
TO HIS QUESTIONS BEFORE END OF FEBRUARY. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH.  
(END CONFIDENTIAL).  
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## Message Attributes

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